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PP RUEHCHI RUEHDT RUEHHM RUEHNH
DE RUEHKO #1322 1351009
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 141009Z MAY 08
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 3331
RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA PRIORITY 7792
RUEHGZ/AMCONSUL GUANGZHOU PRIORITY 1373
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG PRIORITY 6518
RUEHNAG/AMCONSUL NAGOYA PRIORITY 6124
RUEHNH/AMCONSUL NAHA PRIORITY 0178
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE PRIORITY 1472
RUEHKSO/AMCONSUL SAPPORO PRIORITY 8383
RUEHGH/AMCONSUL SHANGHAI PRIORITY 0412
RUEHIN/AIT TAIPEI PRIORITY 7034
RUEHRN/USMISSION UN ROME PRIORITY
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 3323
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 9811

UNCLAS TOKYO 001322

SIPDIS

PASS AID/OFDA ROB THAYER

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: JAPAN OFFERS ASSISTANCE TO CHINA

¶1. Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda sent a message to Chinese President Hu Jintao offering disaster assistance following the May 12 earthquake in Sichuan. Foreign Minister Masahiko Koumura sent a similar message to State Councilor Dai Bingguo and Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi. Chief Cabinet Secretary Nobutaka Machimura told the press Japan is ready to send rescue teams to China and stated the GOJ may dispatch its Self-Defense Forces, pending requests from Beijing.

¶2. Japan has offered \$5 million in disaster relief funding, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) Overseas Disaster Assistance Division Director Takashi Koizumi told AID Counselor May 14. Of this funding, \$600,000 is for in-kind assistance (blankets, tents, water containers), which will be delivered May 14 or 15 from Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) warehouses in Singapore. The rest will be divided between cash assistance going directly to the provincial or central government or for funding other assistance through international organizations, depending on requests from Beijing, Koizumi said. Two GOJ officials arrived May 14 in Sichuan province to assess what further help Japan can offer.

¶3. The GOJ is also prepared to send a disaster relief team composed of 50-60 individuals, including disaster relief specialists, firemen, policemen, and members of the Japanese coast guard, Koizumi continued. In addition, the GOJ has offered an emergency medical team of 20 doctors, nurses, and logisticians. Beijing has yet to respond to these offers and Koizumi speculated the area's remoteness may be slowing a needs assessment.

¶4. Foreign Ministry Overseas Disaster Assistance Division Deputy Director Hiroaki Sano stated approximately 300 Japanese long-term residents are in Sichuan province, 250 of those are in Chengdu. The Japanese consulate in Chengdu had contacted approximately 40% of them by May 13. None have reported injuries, Sano said.

¶5. Japanese businesses with ties to China also plan to provide aid relief. Toyota Motor Corporation has offered vehicles and cash while others have pledged instant noodles and additional monetary contributions.

¶6. Comment. The GOJ has, in recent weeks, given \$20 million in emergency food relief to Sudan, \$10 million in assistance to Burma in response to Cyclone Nargis, and now \$5 million

for China. This funding is being pulled from budgeted, but as yet unspent, assistance programming that may be replenished through the supplemental budget process at the end of Japan's fiscal year. These unplanned contributions, however, may have an impact on Japan's ongoing assistance programming and its ability to provide additional funding for other assistance programs elsewhere. End Comment.
DONOVAN